

In the years of childhood under study, the stability of group relations is still very tentative, and closely dependent upon the leadership of adults. I am examining tendencies and conditions rather than achievements.

It is not only positive relations within the group that come to enjoy some degree of permanence and organisation.

The external rivalry, too, undergoes elaboration in social forms. For example, every form of competitive group game, in these years or later, builds up this rivalry, and serves to legitimise and honour it. It is implicit in all the loyalties of team or club and school or village. As educators, we have long made use of these group rivalries to break down the isolation of the individual and to foster group consciousness and pride of achievement. But we commonly turn our gaze from the negative to the positive side, preferring to dwell upon devotion to *this* group rather than on the correlative enmity to *that*. Yet the one largely implies and rests upon the other.

The function of these group rivalries is of course a continuous one. It is not only in its initiation that group loyalty rests upon the mechanism of displacement, but throughout its history. There is a continual drainage of the hostility aroused by the inevitable minor clashes of interest between the individuals forming the group, outward to the rival group. When this fails, or the tension of civil strife is so increased by events that the mechanism can no longer cope with it, the group breaks up.

The main direction of change in the social contacts of young children is thus that their loves and their hates alike become slowly stabilised. The fluid and fleeting attitudes of the earliest years settle down by means of experience and of history into the more organised and socially honoured

group loyalties
and rivalries. And the naive, spontaneous
group fellow-
ships and animosities so clearly shown in the
years of these
records form the bridge which carries each
child over from
his early egocentric attitudes to recognisably
social modes
of feeling, thinking and doing.

But the process is gradual. There is no sudden metamorphosis of the egoist into the socialist, at any given age. The change goes on at different rates in different children, and is in all of them subject to moods and occasions. In a moment of internal stress or external strain, any and every